



## **Kadwa Patel Samaj of North America Breast Cancer Awareness Initiative**



### **What is breast Cancer?**

Cancer is a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control. When cancer starts in breast it is called breast cancer.

#### **Breast Cancer Facts:**

- Breast cancer detection among Indian women tends to occur at a later stage than in white women.
- Breast cancer survival rates tend to be lower among diagnosed Indian women than in white women.
- When detected early, breast cancer can be successfully treated and 5 year survival rate is very high (97%).
- Breast cancer is the leading cancer among women of many Asian and Pacific Islander groups in the U.S. Many women do not know they have breast cancer until it is advanced.

***"Take care of your health now, so you can be there for your family later"***

### **Who is at risk?**

Simply being a woman and getting older puts you at risk for breast cancer. The older you are, the greater your chances of getting breast cancer.

Also you are at higher risk if :

- Your mother, sister, or daughter has had breast cancer.
- Not having children or having your first child later in life.
- Starting your menstrual period at an early age.
- Beginning menopause at a late age.
- Having certain genetic condition
- Being overweight mainly after menopause.
- Using hormone replacement therapy for long time
- Using oral contraceptives.
- Physically inactive.
- Drinking alcohol.

### **How can I find out if I have Breast cancer?**

When breast cancer starts out it is too small to feel and does not cause signs and symptoms. Finding the disease early with mammograms and breast exams by your doctor or nurse can save your life.

- Women should know how their breasts normally look and feel and report any breast change promptly to their health care provider. Breast self-exam (BSE) is an option for women starting in their 20s.
- Between ages of 20 & 39, women should have clinical breast exam by physician every 3 years.
- Women over 40 should have a mammogram and clinical breast exam every year.
- Women at higher risk many need to get screened earlier and more frequently than recommended.

***"Early detection will give you more treatment options and better chance of survival"***

### **What is a mammogram?**

A mammogram is a low-dose X-ray picture of the breast. A mammogram along with a breast exam by your doctor or nurse can find breast cancer at an early stage when it can best be treated. A mammogram **does not** cause cancer. Because the amount of radiation used is very low, the risk of any harm is extremely small.

### **What happens during a mammogram?**

A mammogram is a simple test. When you go for a mammogram, the technician taking the picture will place your breast between two X-ray panels. The panels will push your breast between them to get a clear picture. You may feel a little bit of discomfort but each x-ray takes less than one minute.

**Do It for Yourself  
Do It for Your Family**

## **Who should get mammogram?**

- Women in their 40s and older should get a mammogram every 1 to 2 years.
- A woman's chance of getting breast cancer is greater as she ages.

## **Why should I have a mammogram?**

Mammograms can save your life by finding breast cancer early. A mammogram can show cancer that is too small for you or your doctor to feel. When breast cancer is found early, you have more treatment options and certainly a better chance to survive.

## **How can I prevent Breast Cancer?**

Scientists are studying how best to prevent breast cancer. There are things you can do to help lower your risk of getting breast cancer.

- Staying physically active with regular exercise.
- Maintaining a healthy weight.
- Avoiding hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or finding out the risks and benefits of HRT and if it right for you.
- Limiting the amount of alcohol that you drink.

## **How will I pay for mammogram?**

Check with your insurance plan about costs and copayments. Most insurances will cover mammogram without co-pays.

If you have low income or do not have insurance, and are between the ages of 40 and 64, you may be able to get a free or low cost mammogram thorough the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

([www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/))

### **A Woman's Chance of Being Diagnosed With Breast Cancer Is**

By age 40 ... 1 out of 257  
By age 50 ... 1 out of 67  
By age 60 ... 1 out of 36  
By age 70 ... 1 out of 28  
By age 80 ... 1 out of 24  
Ever..... 1 out of 8

Source: National Cancer Institute Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program, 1997

## **Trouble Signs that should NOT be Ignored**

Be aware of possible problems in your breast or underarm area. If you notice any of the following signs, make an appointment with your physician immediately.

- Lumps, mass, hard knot or thickening of any parts of the breast.
- Swelling, warmth, redness or darkening that does not go away.
- Change in the size or shape of your breast
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin of your breast.
- Itchy, scaly sore or rash over nipple.
- Pulling in of your nipple or other part of breast.
- Nipple discharge that starts suddenly.
- New pain in one spot that does not go away.

***“Not just once, but for a lifetime. Mammograms can save lives”.***

*\* The information in this document is not intended as medical advice or to replace the expertise and judgment of your medical team. It is intended to help you and your family make informed decisions, together with your doctor. Your doctor may have reasons for suggesting a treatment plan different from these general treatment options. Don't hesitate to ask him or her questions about your treatment options.*

### **Web Resources:**

National Cancer Institute

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

Susan G Komen for the cure

[www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)

American Cancer Society

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

Gujarat Cancer & Research Institute

[www.cancerindia.org](http://www.cancerindia.org)

Breast Self Exam instructions

[www.komen.org/bse](http://www.komen.org/bse)

***“Do It for Yourself, DO It for Your Family”***

**KADWA PATEL SAMAJ OF NORTH AMERICA**

**WWW.KPSNA.ORG**